



Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

THE RIGHT TO BE

№1
2026



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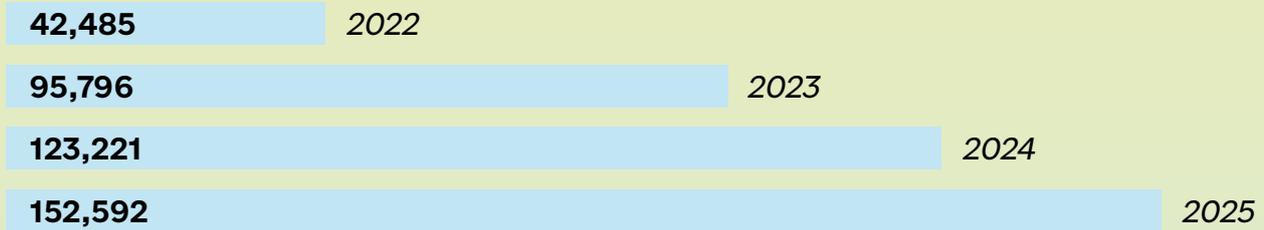
HUMAN RIGHTS: BETWEEN CHAOS AND LAW

2025 was a year when the chaos of war cut even deeper into people's everyday lives, yet the need for the law as a point of support also increased.

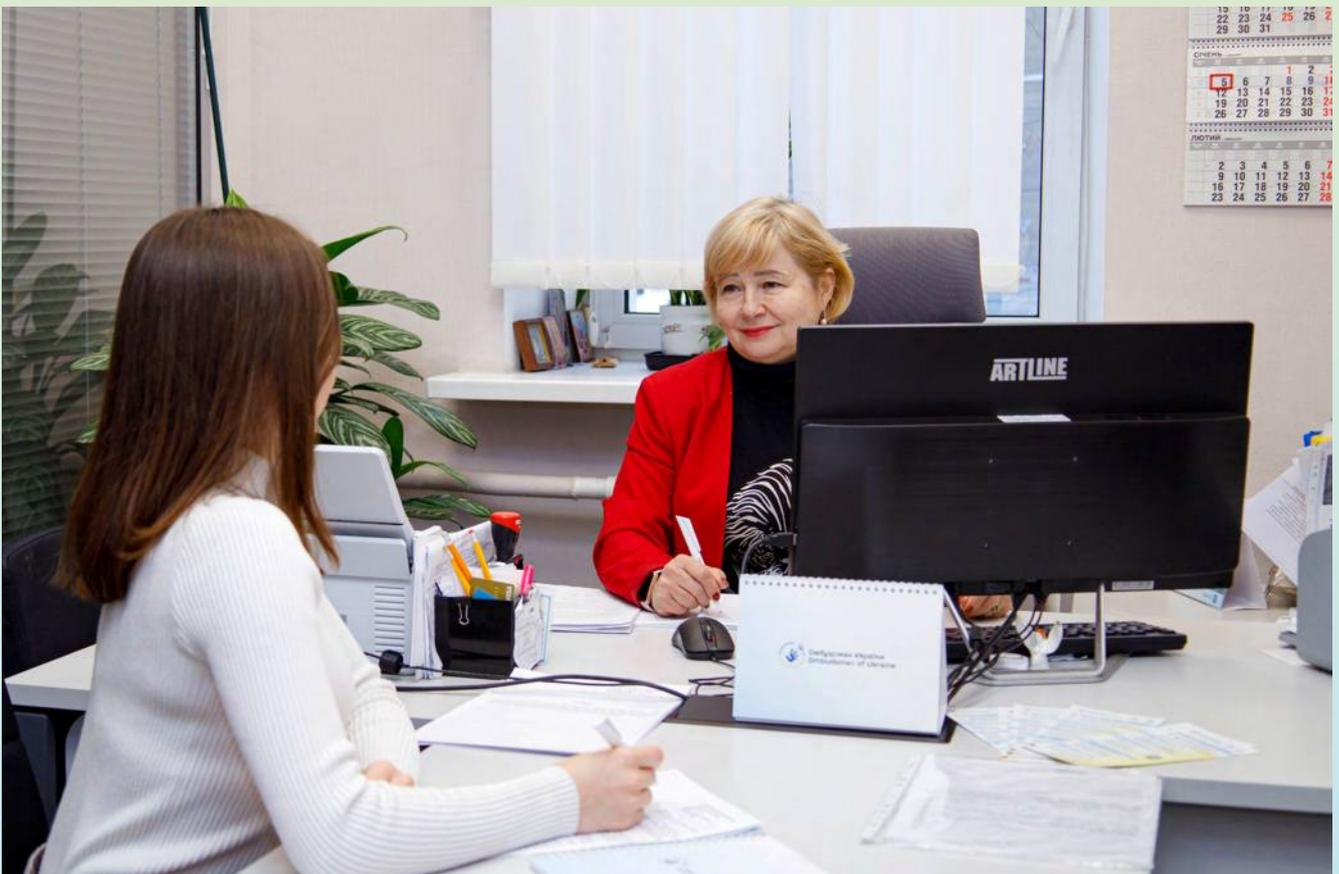
Compared to previous years, the number of appeals to the Office of the Ombudsman has increased again.

In 2025, there were over 152,500 appeals, which is 24% more than in 2024, 59% more than in 2023, and 260% more than in 2022.

In the first month of 2026, we have already received nearly
11,300 applications



A significant increase in the number of appeals is not just statistics, but an indicator of the fact that **citizens are increasingly seeking protection of their rights** in times of instability, violations, and uncertainty. This was also influenced by two other factors: the expansion of the network of Representations of the Commissioner and the increase in legal education of the population.





RIGHTS OF MORE THAN 1.5 MILLION PEOPLE

**have been restored upon consideration
of the appeals in 2025**

Issue No1, 2026



**Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine**



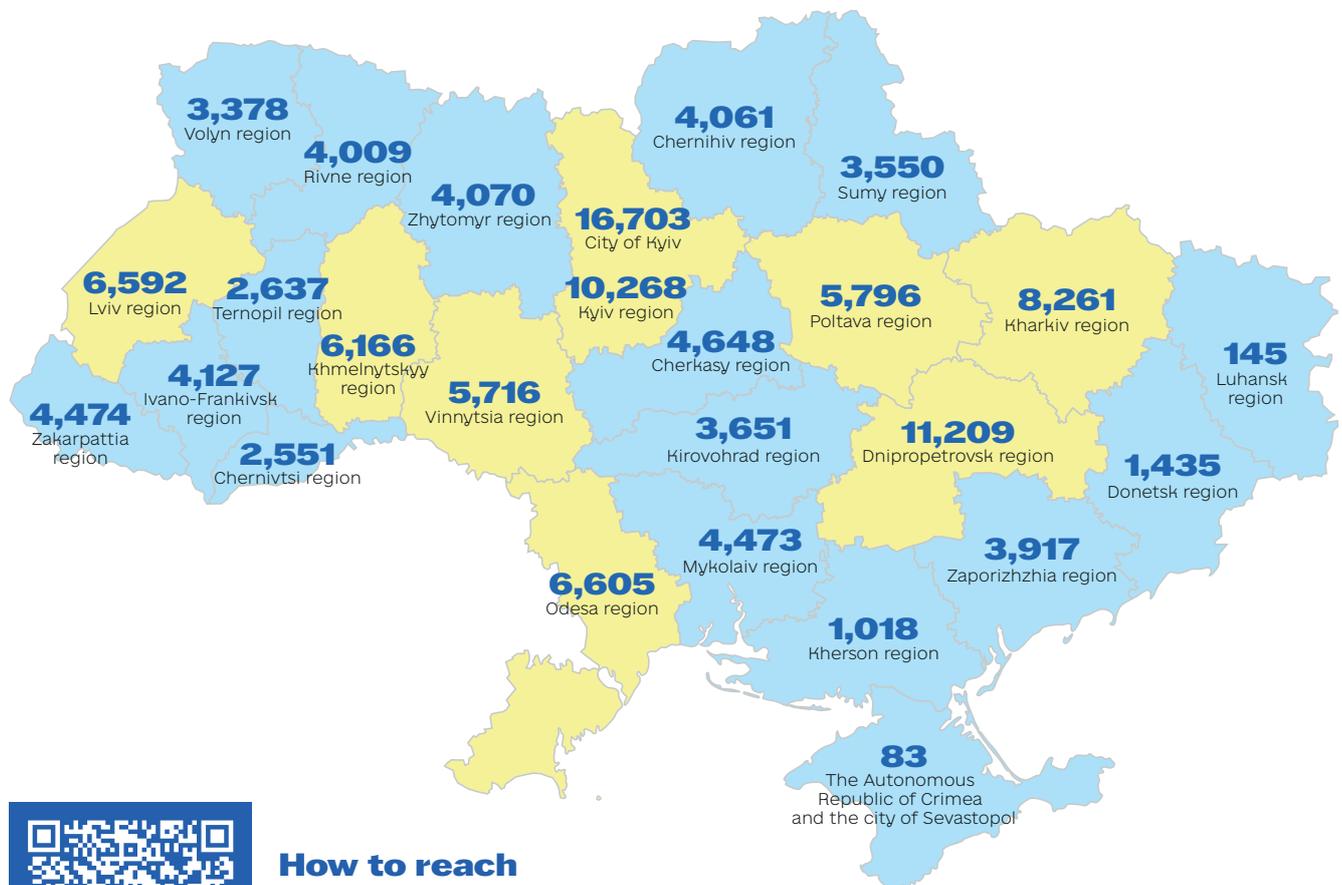
Some important figures of the activities of the Office of the Ombudsman activities in 2025:

- **6,161** proceedings were initiated.
- **4,920** positions on draft regulatory legal acts were provided.
- **4,546** monitoring visits were carried out.
- **151** submissions of the Commissioner were prepared.
- **30** protocols on the administrative offenses were drawn up.

WORK IN THE REGIONS UPHOLDS HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2025, the Office of the Ombudsman continued **to develop its regional network**. Representatives of Dmytro Lubinets, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, **work in all regions of Ukraine**. The Representative for Donetsk and Luhansk regions works in Dnipro, the Representative for Crimea works in Kyiv.

Number of appeals from the regions of Ukraine in 2025



How to reach the Regional Representations of the Commissioner?

Learn more about human rights protection
in the information brochure portal
of the Ombudsman's Office



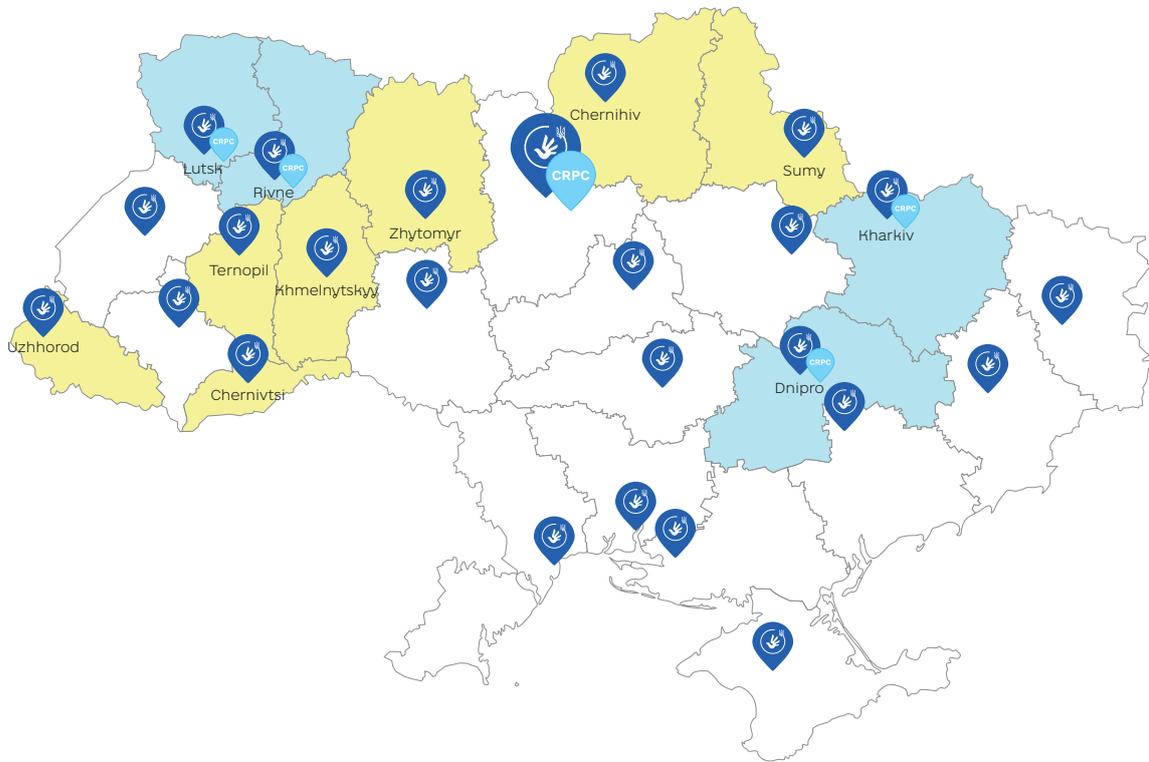
Уповноважений
Верховної Ради
України
з прав людини



HUMAN AND CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION CENTERS: Places of Help

With the support of international partners, in 2025:

- **7 Human Rights Protection Centers** were opened in Zhytomyr, Sumy, Uzhhorod, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Khmelnytskyy, and Ternopil (a total of 10 Centers have already been opened across Ukraine);
- **4 Child Rights Protection Centers** were opened in Dnipro, Rivne, Lutsk, and Kharkiv (the Center in Kyiv had been opened in 2023).



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SCHOOL AND STUDENT OMBUDSMANS – THE FUTURE THAT IS CREATED NOW

The introduction of School and Student Ombudsmans was a response to the need to increase human rights awareness among youth. Their key tasks include **the protection of rights and the prevention of violations.**

School Ombudsmans have already been introduced in **16 regions of Ukraine.** The top 5 regions by number of those are Kirovohrad, Chernivtsi, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil regions. **Their total number across the country reaches 1,581 children.**

Student Ombudsmans are currently working in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Khmelnytskyi, and Chernivtsi regions. **Their number is 45 young people.** This initiative will be implemented further.



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NOT ONLY IN UKRAINE: Expansion of the Network Abroad

6 Representatives and **19 Advisors** of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights work abroad.

-  Armenia
-  Austria
-  Belgium
-  Bulgaria
-  Canada
-  the Czech Republic
-  Denmark
-  Estonia

-  Georgia
-  Germany
-  Greece
-  Italy
-  Luxembourg
-  Moldova
-  North Macedonia
-  Norway
-  Poland

-  Portugal
-  Serbia
-  Slovakia
-  Spain
-  Sweden
-  United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
-  USA



HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION IN THE SYSTEM OF BODIES IN THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE SECTOR: An Urgent Need

The direction of human rights protection in the security and defense sector:

- **44,783** appeals.
- **45** monitoring visits.
- **631** draft legal acts processed.
- **139** proceedings initiated.

This direction concentrated on improving legislation, protecting and restoring the rights of veterans, conscripts, military servicemen, family members of fallen defenders, prisoners of war, and missing Ukrainians.

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MORE THAN 2,000 SERVICEMEN AND CIVILIANS HOME: Results of 2025

Constant attention was paid to the return of citizens of Ukraine home. During 2025, **10 exchanges were conducted**, during which more than **2,000** people were released and returned to Ukraine.



6,422 UKRAINIANS,

of them **409 civilians,**
have returned home since the beginning of the full-scale invasion





During each exchange, employees of the Office of the Ombudsman record the **condition** in which citizens return home, interview them and collect evidence about the conditions of detention and treatment of Ukrainians in enemy captivity.

The Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, maintains **communication on humanitarian issues** with the Russian Human Rights Commissioner. This primarily concerns mutual **information exchange on missing persons, assistance in visiting prisoners of war, and ensuring the rights of citizens are upheld.**

Within the framework of this communication, **5,000 parcels and about 5,000 letters have been sent to prisoners of war.**



SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT: Working with the Families of Prisoners of War and Missing Persons

Throughout 2025, around **610** meetings were organised in Kyiv and regions of Ukraine with relatives of Ukrainian POWs and missing persons, attended by over **39,000** people.

Separately, under the leadership of the Representatives of the Commissioner in **8** regions, regional working groups of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War are operating.

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LEGISLATION: What Changes Have Been Made to Protect the Rights of Military Personnel and Their Families?

1. Investigations into cases of persons missing under special circumstances during the war have been simplified. Now, families of missing persons can exercise their rights more quickly, and in some cases, investigations are conducted at their place of residence. This change in legislation is one of the recommendations of the Commissioner in the 2024 Annual Report.



2. Ensured the right of families of deceased military personnel to receive a one-time cash benefit after the expiry of a three-year period from the date of death of the Defender. This decision was approved by Government Resolution No. 631. It was initiated by the Commissioner as a response to citizens' appeals.

3. Improved support for civilians released from Russian captivity, in particular assistance in renewing documents, providing medical care and other social services. At the initiative of the Commissioner, the Government approved Resolution No. 940.

4. Priority guarantees were introduced for civilians released from Russian captivity who need urgent state support until they obtain the status of persons whose deprivation of personal liberty as a result of armed aggression against Ukraine has been established. This includes providing such persons with medical care, psychological and rehabilitation support, free legal aid, essential items, a one-time financial assistance of 50,000 hryvnias, etc.

5. At the initiative of the Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets, the Ministry of Social Policy has drafted a Law that would allow combatants and people with war-related disabilities **to receive 100% of their earnings** during illness, as well as during pregnancy and childbirth, if they have the necessary insurance experience. **The document is currently undergoing approval.**

Regarding veteran policy:

- Approximately **2,500 appeals** have been received from veterans and their families.
- **18% of them concerned delays of up to 6 months in the appointment and payment** of one-time financial assistance for deceased military personnel.

Systemic violations of veterans' rights were also identified: illegal restrictions on pensions, delays in establishing disability, failure to comply with housing provision standards, and the lack of a unified approach to honouring the memory of the deceased.

Separately, with the support of the Council of Europe, **monitoring of the compliance with veterans' rights was carried out in a number of regions of Ukraine** (Zakarpattia, Lviv, Chernivtsi, Khmelnytsky, Vinnytsia). Recommendations were developed for the authorities on the development of the infrastructure necessary for veterans.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MOBILISATION MEASURES: Human Rights First

The Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, monitors possible violations of rights – both of citizens and of employees of the Territorial Centre for Recruitment and Social Support during mobilisation measures.

Based on the results of the Commissioner's appeals, the pre-trial investigation authorities entered information **about 34 cases** of violations of citizens' rights by officials of the Territorial Centre for Recruitment and Social Support, whose actions contained signs of criminal offences, into the Unified Register of Pre-trial Investigations.



PROTECTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS — THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH A COUNTRY GROWS

In the area of child rights protection:

- **3,426** appeals.
- **831** monitoring visits.
- **421** draft regulatory and legal acts processed.
- **673** proceedings initiated.

Over 7,600 cases of restoration of rights

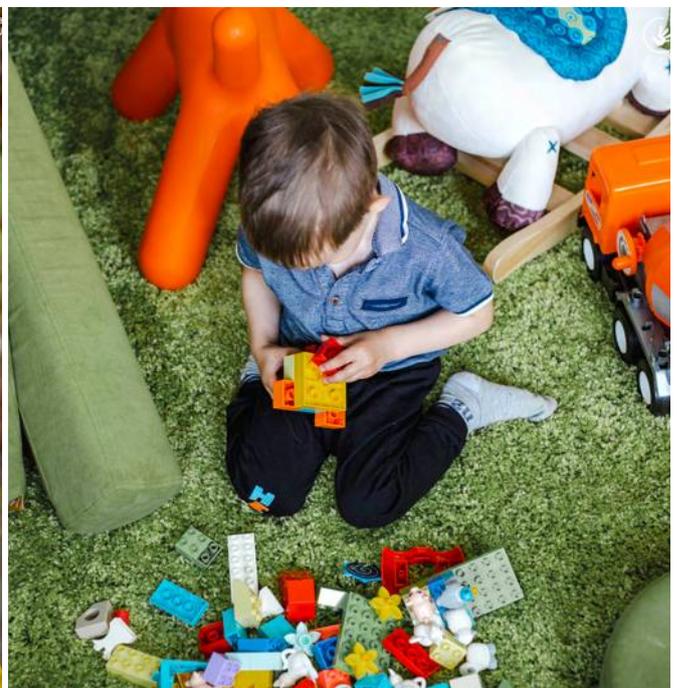
The work was aimed at restoring the key basic rights of the child – to life and safety, family upbringing, education, health care, social protection, dignified treatment and protection from violence.

Thanks to the intervention of the Commissioner, children were returned home, including a **unique case of the return of a three-year-old boy from Cairo**, who had been left there without his mother.

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ABOUT 2,000 CHILDREN WERE RETURNED

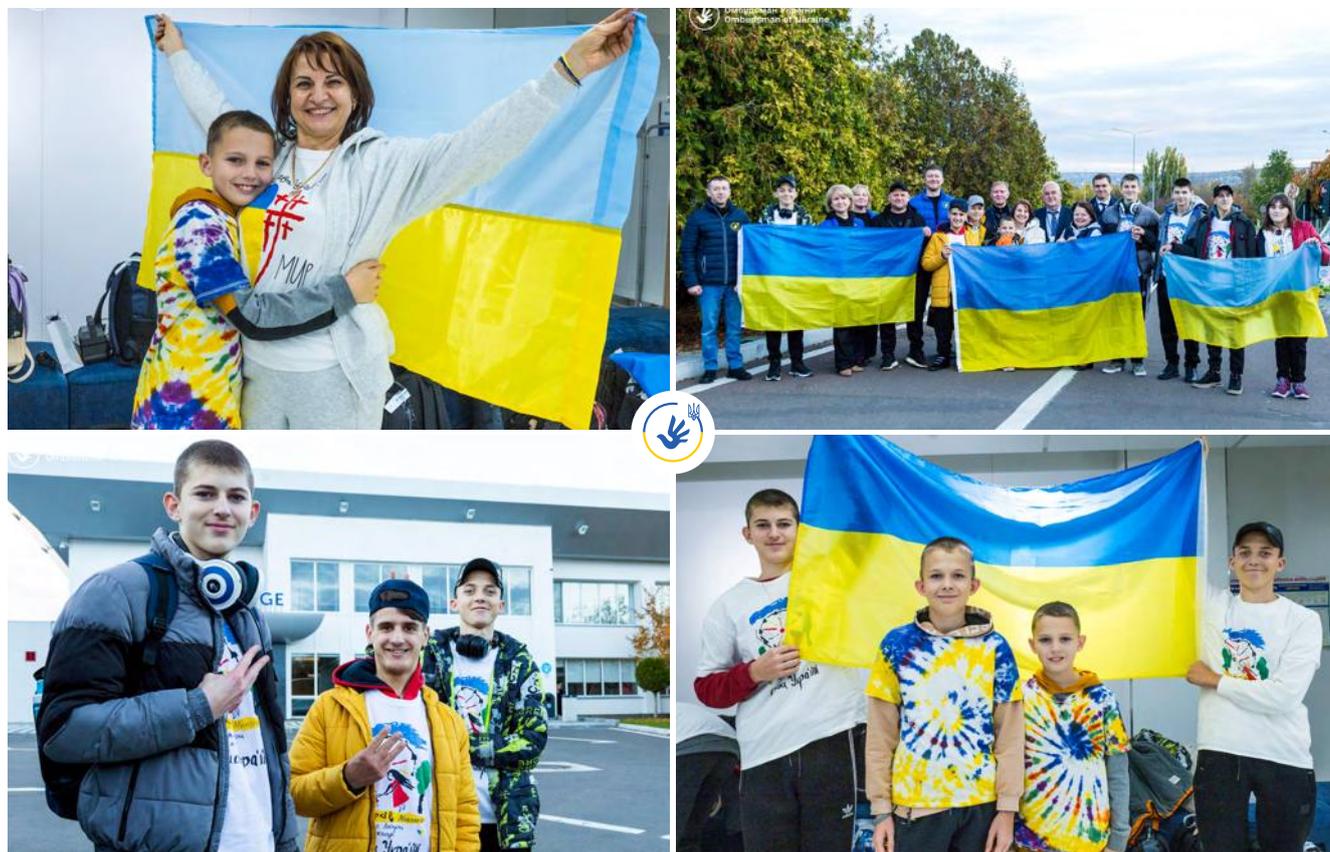
from the temporarily occupied territories and the Russian Federation as part of the Ukrainian President's Bring Kids Back UA initiative of 24 February 2022





The pupils of the Novopetrivska Special School from Mykolaiv region were successfully brought back. The children found themselves under occupation, then they were moved to Crimea, and later to Russia.

The teachers who were with the children, understanding the danger of living under enemy pressure, rescued all the children and left with them for Georgia, where they lived for more than three years. **In October 2025, the children returned to Ukraine.**



A LAW THAT WORKS FOR CHILDREN

1. One of the key changes is **the elimination of legislative conflict in granting the status of a child affected by war and armed conflict.** The Office of the Ombudsman received numerous appeals from families who were denied status due to contradictions between the Law of Ukraine “On the Protection of Children” and the government’s Procedure. After proceedings were initiated and submitted to the Ministry of Social Policy, the regulations were brought into line. The result is an expanded list of grounds for obtaining status and a simplified procedure. **Thousands of children have gained real access to protection.**

2. Another step forward was **the Law of Ukraine “On Mentoring.”** At a time when thousands of children lost their parents or family ties, **the state systematically recognised mentoring as a social service for the first time.** The law defined the rules and requirements for mentors and paved the way for both individual and corporate mentoring.

Protecting children’s rights during war is not about perfect laws. It is about the ability to make decisions in a timely manner!



TURNING THE STAND: Restoring the Rights of War Victims

In terms of protecting the rights of victims of armed aggression against Ukraine:

- **5,215** appeals.
- **1,946** monitoring visits.
- **225** draft regulatory and legal acts processed.
- **1,827** proceedings initiated.

In 2025, the Office of the Ombudsman focused on the systematic protection of the rights of IDPs, Ukrainians abroad and residents of temporarily occupied territories. **The rights of more than 41,600 people were restored.** Recommendations were prepared for the Government on **IDP support programmes, and the protection of the rights of citizens abroad** was strengthened through consultations, monitoring visits and analytical proposals. Separately, large-scale **legal awareness-raising work** was carried out **for war victims, as well as training for teachers working with children from TOT.**

REMOVAL OF BARRIERS FOR WAR-AFFECTED PERSONS: Legislative Amendments

1. At the request of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, **the procedure for establishing war-related disability status for persons injured in the TOT has been regulated.** In 2025, the Government adopted amendments allowing confirmation of this status for individuals from de-occupied territories. Additional amendments are currently under consideration by the Cabinet of Ministers to extend this right to persons affected in territories that remain under occupation.

2. **A unified mechanism for the payment of pensions and insurance benefits has been introduced for individuals** temporarily staying abroad, residing in temporarily occupied territories, or having left such areas. Following submissions by the Commissioner, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a procedure that allows IDPs to receive pension payments without requiring a certificate confirming their registration as IDPs, as supported by the Office of the Ombudsman.

LIFE WITHOUT RIGHTS: the Reality in Temporarily Occupied Territories

1. Systematic confiscation of property. On 9 December 2025, the Russian authorities adopted a law introducing a special procedure for recognising housing in the TOT of Ukraine as “ownerless”. Property may be transferred into the ownership of the occupation authorities without confirmation of the legal owner. It may be entered into special registers until 1 January 2030. Afterwards, it may be reassigned to other persons. Should the owner later come forward, the law formally provides for the possibility of compensation.

2. A Russian passport is not a choice, but coercion. Forced passportisation of the population continues in the TOT. It is used as a tool for integration into the political, legal, social and economic space of the Russian Federation. Public statements by representatives of the occupation administrations have been documented. They declare that obtaining a Russian passport is mandatory. Possible negative consequences for refusal are mentioned. These include the risk of forced eviction or deportation beyond the TOT.

3. Propaganda under control. Russia centralises media and restricts communications in the occupied territories. The Russian Federation continues to expand its information presence in the TOT of Ukraine. This is done by establishing and registering controlled print media outlets. Russian journalists and media managers are also deployed to work in these territories.

These actions are just a few examples of human rights violations! The Office of the Ombudsman systematically reports this information to international partners.

Special reports by the Commissioner have been prepared:



On the situation in the TOT



On access to education for children and youth from the TOT

LIFE IN DISPLACEMENT: Monitoring of IDP Living Conditions

In 2025, the Office of the Ombudsman conducted **804 monitoring visits** to temporary accommodation facilities for IDPs. **2,323 recommendations were issued.**

They addressed urgent issues such as:

- the unsuitability of bathrooms and showers for persons with reduced mobility;
- insufficient furniture for storing personal belongings;
- the need for repairs in living rooms and common areas;
- the lack of fire alarms and shelters.

SHELTERS ARE NOT JUST FOR SHOW, THEY ARE FOR SAVING LIVES

The Office of the Ombudsman works systematically to ensure that every shelter in Ukraine is safe, accessible, and suitable for use by all citizens.

1,066 monitoring visits were conducted. **3,838 recommendations were issued.**

The main topics addressed include provision of first aid kits, barrier-free access, sufficient water supplies, comfortable seating, and clear navigation signs.

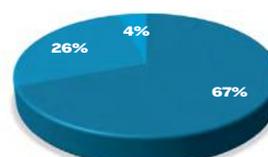
Regarding the implementation of the recommendations:

- **60%** – are in the process of being implemented;
- **24%** – have been implemented;
- **6%** – have been partially implemented;
- **6%** – have not been implemented.



Regarding the implementation of the recommendations:

- **67%** – are in the process of being implemented;
- **26%** – have been implemented;
- **4%** – have not been implemented.





CONCRETE RESULTS FOR PEOPLE: Restoration of Social and Economic Rights

In the area of protection of citizens' social and economic rights:

- **4,940** appeals.
- **90** monitoring visits conducted.
- **1,310** draft regulatory legal acts reviewed.
- **695** proceedings opened.
- **7** submissions were made by the Commissioner to state authorities and local self-government bodies.

In 2025, the rights of over 23,000 citizens were restored, including persons with disabilities, elderly persons, people affected by the Chernobyl disaster, adult former orphans, children deprived of parental care, families of deceased employees, and others.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS: Decisions of the Government and Central Authorities

As a result of work on the protection of social and economic rights, the central executive authorities **took into account the recommendations of the Commissioner**, which were provided:

→ **in two special reports aimed at the protection of rights of:**

1. adult persons who require care and guardianship

The Ministry of Justice has initiated the procedure for the ratification of the Convention on the International Protection of Adult Persons. An Operational Action Plan for 2025–2027 was also approved for the implementation of the Strategy for the Reform of Psychoneurological and Other Residential Institutions, as well as the Deinstitutionalisation of Care for Adults with Disabilities and Elderly Persons, to be completed by 2034.



2. citizens' access to clean and safe water

The Government approved the Operational Action Plan for 2025–2027 for the implementation of Ukraine's Water Strategy until 2050. The plan provides for the identification of areas vulnerable to nitrate accumulation in order to comply with the provisions of the Council of the European Economic Community Directive of 12 December 1991 on the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources.



→ to draft regulatory legal acts aimed at the protection of rights of

▪ people affected by the Chernobyl disaster:

the list of specialised healthcare institutions providing treatment to such individuals has been updated.

▪ persons with disabilities and individuals not entitled to a pension:

1. specific deadlines have been set for the territorial offices of the Pension Fund of Ukraine. They must make decisions on the provision of state social assistance in the context of transferring these functions from social protection authorities;

2. the rehabilitation system for persons with disabilities has been improved. This was done through the introduction of an updated individual rehabilitation programme;

3. a new cause of disability has been introduced. It is deprivation of personal freedom as a result of armed aggression against Ukraine.

▪ employees of critical infrastructure facilities, civil servants, and local government officials:

the procedure for granting one-time financial assistance to this category of employees has been improved. This applies to those whose life and health have been harmed as a result of Russia's armed aggression. The right to such assistance arises even if the critical infrastructure facility is included in the Register of Critical Infrastructure Objects after the occurrence of the accident.

▪ consumers of housing and communal services:

the right of citizens using electricity for heating their homes to a preferential tariff has been ensured until 30 April 2026.

▪ citizens' access to cultural values and the preservation of cultural heritage:

the Strategy for the Development of Culture in Ukraine until 2030 has been approved.



Analytical report

on the observance of human rights during the assessment of a person's daily functioning

An Alternative Report to the fifteenth National Report of the Government of Ukraine on the implementation of the provisions of the European Social Charter (revised) for Group 1 on labour rights has been submitted to the Secretariat of the European Social Charter.



This document was prepared by the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights based on parliamentary control data on the observance of citizens' labour rights, as well as information received from social dialogue parties, trade unions, employers' associations, state authorities, and enterprises of various forms of ownership. This comprehensive approach ensured an objective assessment of the situation in this area," says the

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights, Olena Kolobrodova.



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION: Peace Formula, Solutions, Support

The Office of the Ombudsman strengthens cooperation in the international arena: In 2025, Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets and the Office's leadership held **154 meetings** with representatives of foreign diplomatic missions, delegations and organisations. The Ombudsman spoke at **12 international events**.

The Working Group on the Human Dimension, dedicated to point 4 of the Peace Formula, functions as a permanent platform for professional dialogue and coordination of efforts in the field of human rights protection, in particular in the process of returning three categories of Ukrainian citizens: children, unlawfully detained civilians and prisoners of war. **Under the co-chairmanship of Ukraine, Canada and Norway, 11 meetings of the Working Group were held, 4 of them in 2025.**

The International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children, led by Ukraine and Canada, is a key international platform for coordinating efforts in this area. **The coalition brings together 46 member states and 4 observer countries.**



During 2025, the following organisations **joined the International Coalition:**

States:

- Andorra 
- Monaco 

International organisations:

- Council of Europe 
- European Union 
- OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 

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WORK AT THE LEVEL OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

The Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine has become a member of:



- European Network of Equality Bodies (**EQUINET**);



- the Commissioner took office as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Ombudsman Institute (**IOI**), of which the Ombudsman institution is a member



- work is ongoing to grant Ukraine observer status in the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (**FRA**);



- the Commissioner became a member of the Board of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (**ENNHRI**) and an alternate member of the Board of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (**GANHRI**). In addition, in August 2025, the Commissioner’s institution began preparations for re-accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) in order to confirm its ‘A’ status. In October 2025, the necessary documentation was prepared and submitted for consideration during the 47th session of the GANHRI Accreditation Subcommittee.

STEPS TOWARDS EUROPE: Results of Work in the Field of European Integration

The Office of the Ombudsman has strengthened international cooperation in the context of Ukraine’s European integration:

- active dialogue continued with the EU Delegation to Ukraine and the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine;
- **processed over 100 requests** in the European integration process;
- we participate in the official screening of legislation, in particular, we took part in two bilateral meetings between Ukraine and the European Commission, ensured the institution’s contribution to **Ukraine’s Report within the framework of the 2025 EU Enlargement Package**, and provided expert participation in the preparation of Ukraine’s **negotiating position on Chapter 23, ‘Judiciary and Fundamental Rights’**, joined in the development of Roadmaps on the rule of law and the functioning of democratic institutions, and the Action Plan for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities (communities) in Ukraine;
- joined interdepartmental and working (negotiating) groups: participated in a total of **5 meetings of the Interdepartmental Working Group** on Ensuring the Negotiation Process on Ukraine’s Accession to the EU and Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to EU Law, and **working (negotiating) groups** on the preparation of Ukraine’s negotiating positions during negotiations with the EU on the conclusion of the Agreement on Ukraine’s Accession to the European Union.

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UKRAINIAN CITIZEN IMPRISONED ABROAD: Protecting His Rights

Serhiy Kuznetsov, a Ukrainian citizen, was detained in Italy in connection with the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines. Due to inadequate conditions of detention and lack of a proper diet, he went on hunger strike. **Following the intervention of the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine**, including appeals to the EU and Italian authorities, his rights were restored.



In November 2025, Serhiy Kuznetsov was transferred to Germany. The Ukrainian Ombudsman continued to defend his rights by appealing to the competent authorities and human rights institutions. Despite the documented violations of the conditions of detention, **the case remains under constant scrutiny.**



PROTECTION WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS: How Equality Mechanisms Worked

In terms of protecting equal rights and freedoms, the rights of national minorities, political and religious beliefs:

- **1,756** appeals.
- **70** monitoring visits.
- **365** draft regulatory and legal acts processed.
- **199** proceedings have been opened.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES — REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACCESSING RIGHTS AND SERVICES

- 1. Regulated the issuance of foreign passports** made out in the name of a child to one of the parents or another authorised person.
- 2. The possibility of employees of the State Migration Service of Ukraine travelling with mobile stations to receive documents in remote, hard-to-reach or war-affected settlements, as well as for persons who were held captive due to armed aggression, has been confirmed.**
- 3. The State Standard for Consulting on Housing Adaptation for Persons with Disabilities and Limited Abilities** was approved; its adoption was recommended by the Commissioner in his 2024 Annual Report.

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES: Key Aspects

In 2025, the Office of the Ombudsman focused its work in the field of protecting the rights of national minorities on **overcoming systemic barriers to access to documentation, basic rights and public services:**

- **pilot project to document members of the Roma minority in Mukachevo: 302 individual cases processed:** 159 people received passports, 83 people received birth certificates, and 68 received legal assistance. We also prepared 12 recommendations for the authorities, updated the Roadmap for Documentation, and created an analytical report on key barriers and opportunities for scaling up.
- **project “Social Atlas of Roma Communities in Zakarpattia”:** 530 Roma households were surveyed, and data on 1,373 adults and 1,538 children in a number of communities was collected. **An educational component** was



implemented: 7 events were held in 6 local communities with the participation of over 120 representatives of the Roma community, including Roma mediators. An information guide for Roma families was developed and distributed.

- approved **comprehensive methodological recommendations for conducting monitoring visits** and non-residential inspections regarding compliance with the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine.

Of the **75** recommendations, **76%** have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented – results of the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Report of the Commissioner on the observance of the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples in the context of the Russian Federation’s armed aggression against Ukraine.

! Low levels of progress were recorded in the area of documentation and combating discrimination.

GUARANTEES OF LEGALITY IN PRESERVING RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

In 2025, the **Office of the Ombudsman joined the Commission** for the verification of the historical and scientific value of the remains of the Venerable Pechersky in the Near and Far Caves of the National Reserve ‘Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra’.

During the year, **22 working visits were made, during which 63 sites in the Near Caves and 34 sites in the Far Caves were inspected.** This ensured the transparency and legitimacy of procedures and the preservation of religious heritage sites.

URGENT SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF THE CRSV: Over a Thousand People Have Received Reparations

Special attention is paid to protecting survivors of domestic and sexual violence, including violence related to armed conflict: shelters have been strengthened, local response mechanisms have been updated, and criminal proceedings have been initiated.

The Pilot Project on Providing Urgent Interim Reparations to Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, implemented by the Global Fund for Survivors of Violence, received **1,208 applications from individuals** who were likely survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. **The representative of the Commissioner, Oleksandr Osipov,** was a member of the Supervisory Board of this project.



- **Reparations were agreed for more than 1,000 survivors, including 726 men, 331 women and 23 children.**



AFTER ALMOST 20 YEARS: St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church in Kyiv Returned to the Religious Community

The religious community of the Parish of St. Nicholas in Kyiv appealed to the Ukrainian Commissioner regarding the Ministry of Culture's failure to enforce a court decision to transfer the Church to the parish's use. Despite instructions from the President of Ukraine and a memorandum signed with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, for many years the Church remained a "concert venue" rather than a fully functioning place of worship.

The Office of the Ombudsman took the case under its supervision: sent formal inquiries, clarified the circumstances, and conducted a monitoring visit to the Church. It was identified and documented that the Church was in an emergency condition.

As a result of all the measures taken by the Office of the Ombudsman, justice prevailed: **on 6 January 2026, St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church was finally transferred to the religious parish.**



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ELECTIONS DURING AND AFTER THE WAR: Security, Rights, and Public Trust

Any decisions regarding the electoral process must be based on the following:

- the Constitution and laws of Ukraine; in particular, elections must be held after the termination of martial law;
- genuine security guarantees for voters, candidates, members of election commissions, and electoral infrastructure;
- the ability to ensure elections for everyone, including internally displaced persons, military personnel, Ukrainians abroad, residents of frontline areas, and, in particular, people living in the temporarily occupied territories.

- **Online voting is currently impossible due to security, technical, and legal risks.** Digital tools may be used solely to simplify voter registration, but not for the voting process itself.

The Ukrainian Commissioner Dmytro Lubinets, his Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, Rights of National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs, Oleksandr Osipov, as well as the Commissioner's Advisers in relevant areas, have joined the Working Group tasked with preparing legislative proposals on the organisation of elections during a special period and post-war elections.

HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER CONDITIONS OF DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY:

Protection and Oversight



Implementation of the National Preventive Mechanism functions:

- **626** monitoring visits.
- **46** draft legal acts reviewed.
- **62** submissions by the Commissioner.
- **861** inquiries and initiative letters.
- **10** criminal proceedings were initiated, based on reports from the Commissioner's Representative.

A few examples of changes:

1. Amendments were made to the Law of Ukraine "On Social Services," requiring social service providers in places of deprivation of liberty to register in the State Register. Liability was established for providing services without registration.

2. New rules have been developed for boarding schools and care homes for the elderly and people with disabilities to improve sanitary conditions and the work of medical staff. In addition, amendments were initiated to align the salaries of medical workers in social service institutions with those in general healthcare facilities.

3. Amendments to the rules for boarding schools and social service institutions were initiated to:

- replace discriminatory terminology regarding people with disabilities with modern terms compliant with national legislation and international standards;
- improve the procedures for accounting and using pensions and social benefits for residents of boarding schools, including legally incapacitated adults, ensuring that funds are used properly and transparently.

4. Legislative changes were initiated to implement an electronic system of record-keeping and monitoring in penitentiary institutions. This system will track the movement of inmates and convicted persons between cells and facilities, and monitor the operation and technical condition of video surveillance.

An automated system for the NPM has been created

Its primary objective is to make the NPM's work more effective and transparent. To achieve this, the system improves the collection, processing, and analysis of data, streamlines internal workflows and the organisation of monitoring activities, and strengthens the NPM's institutional capacity. **The automated system is currently undergoing testing,** with its official launch scheduled for January 2026.

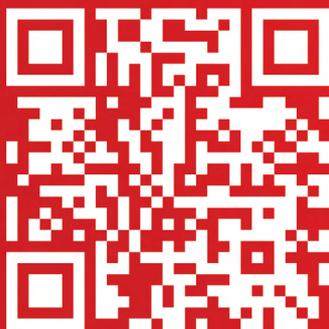


THREE PILOT PROJECTS — ONE GOAL: the Protection of Human Rights

The Office of the Ombudsman has implemented three key pilot projects:

- 1. Regional NPM groups. Civil society monitors were involved in visits to places of deprivation of liberty:** **76** visits were carried out across 19 regions of Ukraine, reports were prepared, and recommendations were submitted to the authorities.
- 2. Interaction with supervisory commissions of regional and district state administrations.** Within this project, **7** follow-up visits were conducted in Kyiv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernihiv, and Volyn regions, contributing to improved coordination and oversight of human rights compliance at the local level.
- 3. Systematic monitoring at the Kyiv pre-trial detention centre.** Together with NPM civil society monitors, **70** visits were conducted to assess detention conditions and the observance of the rights of convicted persons and those held in pre-trial detention.

In addition, in cooperation with the charitable foundation “Let’s Help”, a training **project titled “Human Rights in Geriatric Institutions”** was implemented. The project included 10 training sessions across various regions of Ukraine to raise staff awareness of the rights of elderly people and persons with disabilities.



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ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS THE FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY



In the area of information rights protection:

- **18,621** reports in this area.
- **4,136** appeals.
- **2,580** proceedings.
- **356** monitoring visits.
- **104** inspections on personal data protection.
- **72** orders based on the results of personal data protection inspections.
- **901** draft regulatory and legal acts processed.
- **3** submissions by the Commissioner.
- **13** protocols for violations of the requirements of the Law of Ukraine “On Access to Public Information” (Article 212-3 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences).
- **1** protocols for failure to comply with the lawful requirements of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (Article 188-40 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences).

BEST PRACTICES FOR RESPECTING CITIZENS’ INFORMATION RIGHTS

→ **Scandal involving the Defender’s data: passport details, tax identification number (TIN), and home address made publicly available**

A soldier contacted the Office of the Ombudsman in connection with the illegal dissemination of his personal data on the Internet, in particular through Telegram bots. The information disclosed included the applicant’s surname, first name and patronymic, date of birth, taxpayer identification number, passport details, residential address and telephone number. The personal data of other individuals was also disseminated. Based on the evidence of a criminal offence, the materials were forwarded to the National Police of Ukraine, which entered the information into the Unified Register of Pre-trial Investigations and launched a pre-trial investigation.

→ **“Ukrposhta” has suspended in-person customer service during the war**

“Ukrposhta” posted information about the temporary suspension of in-person customer service due to the introduction of martial law in Ukraine and for security reasons. **Following the Ombudsman’s response, the company announced that it was preparing updated rules for customer service for 2026, taking into account the recommendations.**



→ **The Office of the Ombudsman ensured a journalist's access to public information**

The Kamianets-Podilskyi City Council did not provide a journalist from ZHAR.INFO with information about deputies' foreign trips. **Only after the intervention of the Office of the Ombudsman** was the right to access information restored, and the administrator provided the journalist with the requested information.

→ **Tariffs were increased and the figures were hidden: the director of the management company was fined after the Commissioner's intervention**

After a citizen appealed to the Commissioner, a violation of the right to access information by the housing construction corporation "Upravdom" was established. The company refused to provide economic justification for the increase in the cost of services and ignored the official explanations of the Office of the Ombudsman. **The director of the cooperative was brought to justice: the Podilskyi District Court of Kyiv found him guilty and imposed an administrative fine.**

→ **The Office of the Ombudsman continues to protect the rights of veterans and citizens to access important information**

A combatant, war veteran and person with a war-related disability appealed to the Office of the Ombudsman due to the refusal of the Holosiivskyi District State Administration to provide copies of documents regarding two unauthorised structures in Holosiivskyi Park. **After the intervention of the Office of the Ombudsman**, the District State Administration reconsidered the request and provided all the necessary information, restoring the veteran's right to access public information.

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RESPECT FOR INFORMATION RIGHTS: 106 Educational Events

- These are **training sessions** for the Central Election Commission, the National Police, the All-Ukrainian Association of Territorial Communities, the National School of Judges, the Patrol Police, the State Audit Service, the Pension Fund, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society, and other organisations.
- **Course "Training programme for data protection officers (DPOs) in Ukrainian state institutions"** (in cooperation with the Higher School of Public Administration, supported by ESTDEV and Proud Engineers).
- **Educational series for data protection officers (DPOs)** on "Diia.Education" and on EU educational portals (supported by the EU4DigitalUA project).
- Training sessions at the **Summer School of Coaching Skills** on personal data protection and access to public information.
- **Translations of European Data Protection Board (EDPB) decisions** with the support of GIZ and within the framework of the project "Reengineering Public Services in the Eastern Partnership".

In the area of protecting the right to a fair trial and procedural rights:

- **7 164** appeals received.
- **109** proceedings initiated by the Commissioner.
- **733** draft legal acts reviewed.
- **403** monitoring observations.
- **11** submissions by the Commissioner.
- **1** constitutional submission by the Commissioner.
- **81** criminal proceedings initiated based on inspections conducted by the Commissioner.

CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WORK: the Law as the Foundation

→ Procedural rights in civil and administrative proceedings

704 cases of the Kyiv District Administrative Court were not included in the list of cases to be transferred to other courts, which violated individuals' right to access justice. The Commissioner appealed to the State Judicial Administration, which subsequently initiated a review of the cases. As a result, 710 such cases were identified and transferred for automated distribution, **thereby restoring the rights of 287 individuals and 430 legal entities**.

→ Procedural rights in criminal proceedings

The Commissioner was approached by the mother of a five-year-old girl from the Chernihiv region regarding inaction in a case of long-term non-payment of child support by the father, **whose debt exceeded 120,000 hryvnias**. Following the Commissioner's appeal to the regional prosecutor's office, the decision to close the case was overturned, **the investigation was resumed**, and the father was formally notified of suspicion. The case was subsequently referred to court.

LEGISLATION AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

1. Strengthening guarantees of access to free legal aid for detainees and convicted persons. The obligation of penitentiary administration to ensure that **convicted persons have access to a lawyer within 24 hours** of the imposition of a disciplinary sanction was established. Proceedings must be suspended until legal assistance is provided.



2. Amendments to the internal regulations of pre-trial detention centres (SIZO). These amendments **set out the procedures** for detainees and staff of the pre-trial detention centres of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine to process and receive pensions for persons held in pre-trial detention in accordance with pension legislation. In addition, the Commissioner appealed to the Ministry of Social Policy, after which the Pension Fund of Ukraine developed and adopted Resolution No.13-1 in March 2025. This regulation established **the procedure for in-person reception at SIZO and penitentiary institutions** and ensured the exercise of pre-trial detainees’ right to pension benefits.

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: Protection Dimension



The Office of the Ombudsman provides **ongoing communication and expert support** in Ukraine’s interstate cases against Russia. In particular, in matters concerning violations by the Russian Federation of IHL requirements regarding Ukrainian prisoners of war, civilians and children.

A landmark decision was made on 9 July 2025 by the Grand Chamber of the ECHR in the interstate case **“Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia”**, in which it upheld almost all of Ukraine’s complaints against the Russian Federation.

- **The ECHR stated** that the events in Ukraine are unprecedented in the history of the Council of Europe. The nature and scale of the violence, as well as ominous statements about Ukraine’s statehood and independence, pose a threat to peaceful coexistence in Europe.
- **Particular emphasis was placed on the problem of the abduction and illegal transfer of Ukrainian children.** In its conclusions, the Court referred to evidence confirming the systematic nature of these violations. In particular, the ECHR took into account the data presented by the Commissioner in the special report entitled “UNBLOOMED” (2023). The Court also took into account the Commissioner’s public comments and statements made in the media and on international platforms.

COURT DECISIONS CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE WAR

Today, Ukraine has **a legislative provision in place that completely suspends the enforcement of any court decisions** against authorities and legal entities involved in the defence of the state. This moratorium is provided for in paragraph 22 of section 10-2 of Chapter XIII, “Final and Transitional Provisions” of the Law of Ukraine “On Enforcement Proceedings”. The established moratorium leads to the levelling of both the rights protected by the court and the very right to judicial protection in terms of ensuring the proper enforcement of non-property court decisions by the state during the period of martial law in Ukraine.

Considering this a violation of human rights, **the Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, appealed to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine. Currently, the Constitutional Court has opened proceedings on the basis of the Commissioner’s submission.**



HUMANITARIAN MANDATE CANNOT BE NEUTRAL TO TERROR



During his working visit to Geneva, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **Dmytro Lubinets** met with the **President of the ICRC Mirjana Spoljaric Egger**.



“ I expressed my principled disagreement and deep emotional outrage at the statement made by the ICRC Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia. Formulations that place the aggressor state and the defending state on the same level are unacceptable and, at this level, even dangerous,” **Dmytro Lubinets** wrote.

He emphasised:

- **Russia is waging war and deliberately targeting Ukraine’s energy infrastructure**, leaving millions of people without heat, light and water in severe frost. Our citizens, especially children, are freezing in kindergartens, schools, on the streets and at home.
- **Russia is targeting educational institutions, hospitals and residential buildings.** For example, on 9 January, a Russian drone hit our colleague’s house. A medic who was saving lives after the attack was killed in the shelling. The man fled from the Russians in the temporarily occupied Nova Kakhovka, but died a horrible death in Kyiv – under the rubble. This is not an abstract confrontation, but a deliberate tactic of terror against civilians.



“ I invited the ICRC leadership to visit Ukraine and see the consequences of Russian strikes with their own eyes. For example, to spend a day in our office and understand how people work in such conditions. And how they live in homes where there is only three hours of light a day, where the temperature indoors is +7 at best – as it is now on the streets of Geneva. Perhaps then the words on paper will once again correspond to reality,” **the Commissioner** noted.

During the meeting, they also discussed key issues:

- the issue of ICRC access to Ukrainian prisoners of war and unlawfully detained civilians, as well as the organisation’s involvement in their verification;
- the establishment of an effective system for searching for missing persons;
- the ICRC’s support for Ukrainian citizens who want to leave the TOT;
- the issue of prisoner exchange, which was given a lot of time.



“ The ICRC needs access. But first and foremost, it needs access to Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians who are being unlawfully detained by Russia. This is the organisation’s mandate. And it is precisely the lack of systematic access to our people in captivity for years that undermines trust in the ICRC. I draw the attention of the ICRC leadership to the fact that **Ukraine expects the international organisation to consistently implement its humanitarian mandate!**” – notes **the Commissioner**.



RUSSIA IS TURNING WINTER INTO A WEAPON:

Strikes on Civilian and Critical Infrastructure

Strikes on energy, water supply and heating networks are not “collateral damage” but a **deliberate strategy**: to leave cities without light, heat and water in the cold, forcing people to survive in conditions incompatible with normal life. Russia is striking the energy and heating infrastructure in Kyiv and Kyiv region, Kharkiv region, Dnipropetrovsk region, and other regions.

- In the homes of residents of Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, due to constant shelling and the lack of heat and electricity, **the air temperature can reach +2 degrees Celsius.**
- **Some people have been without electricity for up to five days!**

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People receive food and warmth at “Points of Invincibility”.

2025 HAS BEEN THE DEADLIEST YEAR FOR CIVILIANS

Russia commits the most serious crimes on a daily basis and systematically violates international humanitarian law. Due to regular strikes on peaceful cities since 24 February 2022:

- **more than 14,700 civilians have been killed** and more than 39,500 wounded;
- **Russia has killed about 670 children** and injured more than 2,300.

- **In 2025, 2,514 people were killed and over 12,000 wounded. This is 31% more than in 2024.** The heaviest strikes were on peaceful cities, including Kyiv, Ternopil, Kryvyi Rih, and Sumy.



Material damage included:

- more than 250,000 residential buildings were damaged or destroyed;
- 4,456 educational institutions were damaged by bombing and shelling, 408 of which were completely destroyed;
- 2,551 facilities, including 817 healthcare institutions, were damaged or destroyed;
- 1,640 cultural heritage sites and 2,446 cultural infrastructure facilities damaged and destroyed;
- more than 700 religious sites have been destroyed, including 53 that have been completely destroyed.

■ For the first time since World War II, Russia struck the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. This happened on the night of 24 January 2026.

The National Reserve, included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, which survived centuries, empires and wars of the 20th century, became a target in the 21st century!

The destruction of shrines under international protection is a gross violation of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

THESE ACTIONS ARE TERROR AND GENOCIDE AGAINST THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE!

Russia must be stopped now, otherwise the question arises:

will the world learn from history, or will it again allow genocide to become the «norm»?!



Photo: Libkos



Омбудсман України Ombudsman of Ukraine

The strength of international law is measured by its ability to stop evil. We are working to ensure that every crime committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine is properly documented and prosecuted, and that those responsible are held accountable under the law.

Justice is the foundation of future peace.

#StandWithUkraine



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